

Prison Sentence for Man Who Beat Nephew With Pipe

Other defendants plead to rape, leaving the scene of a fatal accident, assault, and theft charges

Deputy Attorney General Anna Currier secured a prison sentence for a 60-year-old Wilmington man who pled guilty to beating his nephew with a metal pipe. After an argument, Mark Herring took a 2-foot-long pipe from the basement of a home he resided in along with his nephew, and repeatedly beat him as he slept, causing injuries including skull and facial fractures, as well as brain hemorrhages. In September 2018, Herring pled guilty to Assault First Degree and Possession of a Deadly Weapon During the Commission of a Felony. A Superior Court judge sentenced Herring to 5 years in prison, followed by 2 years of probation. DOJ social worker Jenn Kutney-Soper assisted with this case.

Deputy Attorney General Jenna Milecki secured a guilty plea from a Newark man whose sexual assault of a minor. In May 2017, Liberty Wiggins, 25, had consensual sex with a minor despite his being 24 at the time. Wiggins pled guilty to one count of Rape Fourth Degree and faces up to 15 years in prison when sentenced by a Superior Court judge in May. Wiggins will also have to register as a Tier 3 sex offender. Paralegal Jayna Quillen and social worker Claudia Melton assisted with the case.

A Superior Court judge sentenced a 22-year-old Seaford man for a hit and run accident that claimed the life of a young girl. Dwayne McConnell received an 18-month prison sentence, followed by one year of home confinement then 18 months of probation for the April 2018 accident. McConnell struck 9-year-old Germani Truitt-Handy as she crossed the street after checking her family's mailbox along German Road in Seaford. In

December 2018, McConnell pled guilty to Operation of a Motor Vehicle Causing Death and Leaving the Scene of a Fatal Car Accident. Deputy Attorney General Michael Tipton prosecuted the case.

Two former employees of a day program for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities pled guilty to Crimes Against a Vulnerable Adult after an incident at the center in Millsboro. Witnessed by several people, in August 2018, Tomika West, 40, of Seaford, and Cherise Hazzard, 28, of Lincoln, restrained a client of the program by pulling her by the ponytail as she tried to leave. A Superior Court judge immediately sentenced both West and Hazzard to 6 months of probation. Both women will be placed on the state's Adult Abuse Registry. Deputy Attorney General Christina Kontis of the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit prosecuted the case along with Chief Investigator Bruce Pinkett.

A woman and her daughter involved in a fraud scheme pled to charges of Falsifying Business Records and misdemeanor Theft by False Pretense. Medicaid Fraud Control Unit Deputy Attorney General Lisa Barchi secured the pleas from Anna Barnes, 54, and Ann Margaret Johnson, 37, both of Morrisville, PA. For about a year beginning October 2016, Johnson was registered as a Personal Care Attendant with Easter Seals of Delaware and Maryland's Eastern Shore, allowing her to be paid to care for her mother, Barnes. In 2017, Barnes moved and became a permanent resident of Pennsylvania, and began receiving Pennsylvania Medicaid, but continued signing and submitting timesheets for care to Easter Seals in Delaware. Both women received a sentence of 6 months of probation and were ordered to make restitution to Easter Seals. Barnes, who pled no contest, must repay \$1,500 and Johnson, who pled guilty, must repay \$516. DOJ special investigator James Armstrong investigated the case with assistance from special investigator Paul Reutter.